What does the online course development process look like?

You'll collaborate closely with an Instructional Designer to design and create your online course. Instructional Designers collaborate with faculty to provide pedagogical consulting and recommendations on how best to bring their course into the online space, and to create course shells that reflect the pedagogical goals of the program, and of each course. The process may be slightly different for each ID and faculty pair. But here are some general milestones:

- **Kick off meeting**: the first meeting between ID and faculty involves dreamscaping the course and developing a Project Charter that's used to set out roles and responsibilities, timelines and milestones, and ways of working together.
- **Developing [the course map](#)**: The ID and faculty work together to develop a course map that sets out the course topic outline and details about learning activities, assignments, materials, etc. If the course has been taught before the syllabus is usually a good starting point for this step.
- **Developing the course shell**: The course map is used by the ID to create the Canvas course shell, which will be a skeletal version of the learning space that includes an overarching structure, design, layout, navigation, and placeholder content.
- **Gathering and creating content**: The faculty member gathers and/or creates content, including multimedia content such as videos, and library reserves. The ID will work with the faculty to ensure that materials meet accessibility requirements (e.g., video captioning)
- **Adding content to the course shell**: The faculty member adds content and/or adapts (placeholder) content provided by the ID in the course shell.
- **Developing a course communication plan**: The ID and faculty work together to design a communication plan that details when and how the instructor will interact with the students. We believe in intentionally building in instructor social presence to boost student engagement.
- **QA**: Once the Canvas course is finalized, the ID will perform a series of final quality assurance checks to ensure a smooth roll out.

What can I expect during my meetings with instructional designers?

You can expect to meet with the ID on a regular basis that will be determined by you and the ID, taking into consideration course development timeline and milestone deadlines, as well as your schedules. In between the meetings, you will likely have "homework" to collect and/or create materials, build out course components, and test out different options. This keeps the course development process moving forward.

At the meetings, you'll:
- Talk through how your pedagogical vision and current syllabus/course will come alive in the online space, and see demonstrations of different options available for course design
- Collaborate on options available in Canvas, and using other tools to build in options for learner variability and student-centered learning
- Check in on timeline progress and adjustments that need to be made based on timing
- Discuss how different pedagogical challenges can be addressed
- Discuss how to help students acclimate to the online space, what supports can be integrated to assist with self-directed learning, and how to design with an eye towards ease of student use

What can I do to prepare?

- Have clearly defined learning goals and objectives. What do you hope students will know/be able to do at the end of this course?
    - We recommend spending some time with the iDesign iDEA Book, which shares quick overviews, resources, and activities related to online course design
- Spend some time reflecting, and taking notes, on the following:
    - What is the essential question for your course? Page 4 of this resource gives some good examples of this idea.
    - What is unique about this course? What is something you feel you do well in the course? What is an activity or resource that really captures the intent of the course?
    - What do you see as the potential of the online course? What might you be able to do that you're not able to do in the on-ground version? How can the course address areas that might currently be a barrier for students, or fill in an element that's currently missing?
- Have as much content as possible identified, understanding that content needs may change during the development process

The Office of Digital Learning & Inquiry (DLINQ) collaborates with Middlebury community members in pursuit of Middlebury's educational mission. We believe that successful collaborations are built on shared goals, a willingness to listen and learn from each other, and trust. We look forward to working with you!

For any questions or issues not related directly to course design (e.g., enrollment, marketing, student services, intellectual property, or related issues) please contact Dr. Sarah Lohnes Watulak (sarahlw@middlebury.edu)